

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law: (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.)"—ROMANS 2: 12, 13.

No. 40. Vol. LXL.

Thursday, October 5. 1899.

Price One Penny.

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

THE following discourse was delivered by President George Q. Cannon at the Utah Stake Conference, Sunday, April 16, 1899.

It is customary for the Elders of this Church, when they arise to speak, to ask the congregation to give them their faith and prayers. There is great propriety in this, because we profess to be a people led by the Lord, and those who speak are expected to do so under the influence of the Spirit of God, without having anything prepared beforehand. It is a most excellent thing for the Church that this is the rule in relation to the preaching of the Gospel. If we were to come before the Saints with prepared discourses, either written or committed to memory, there would be very little if any growth to the Church. The circumstances and needs of the people are known only to the Lord, and if we, as His servants, will place ourselves in His hands, that He may dictate our remarks, then our meetings will be profitable to those who hear and to those who speak. I do not enjoy a meeting unless I am edified and instructed myself. This applies no less to speaker than to hearer; for remarks inspired by the Spirit of God are as beneficial to the speaker as to the hearer. I do not think I should receive much edification from my own speaking, if what I said had been thoroughly prepared and arranged in my mind beforehand. Of course, it is our duty to ponder upon the things of God. Our minds should dwell upon the subjects of the Gospel. But no Elder feels justified, if he has had experience, in either writing or committing to memory that which he shall say to a congregation. Those Elders who in their inexperience may have tried to do so, will, I think, unite in testifying that when they have done this it has checked the Spirit and their speaking has re-

sulted in failure. Therefore, while I stand before you this afternoon I desire to say the things that the Lord wants said, because He knows our circumstances and that which is best adapted to us.

There is one thing which we have learned in this Church, though it has been a hard lesson to master, and that is that the Lord has established a work in the earth very different from anything that has been in existence since the days of primitive Christianity. The manner in which the Church is built up, the manner in which the people are led and guided, our whole way of doing things, is entirely opposed, it may be said, to the methods that prevailed in Christendom before this Church was organized. We are, as has often been said, a peculiar people. Everybody recognizes this in his or her association with us. When we are thrown in company with those who are not of our faith, we are sensible of a difference between us and them; and I believe they are equally sensible of the difference. There is a spirit about the Gospel of Jesus which makes those who possess it different in many respects from those who do not possess it. I have been able to look around a congregation of people and tell pretty well those who were not members of our Church, without knowing anything about them except that which was suggested by their appearance and their manner. I have no doubt that many Elders have had similar experience. In private life we are frequently able, without a word being said, to distinguish non-members from members of the Church. I remember once, while traveling in New Hampshire, I saw a man in a wagon coming towards me. As we met we both stopped simultaneously. He said, "Are you not an Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?" I said, "Yes; are you not Solomon Mack?" He said he was. He was a cousin of the Prophet's. I had never seen him and he had never seen me up to that time, but we recognized each other as Latter-day Saints. I knew, of course, that the Macks lived in that part of the country; but I had no idea, only as the Spirit revealed it to me, that he was Solomon Mack. There have been many instances in my experience where I have been brought in contact with total strangers and have recognized them as members of the Church; and I have been recognized as an Elder by members of the Church who did not know me. This shows that God gives unto His people a spirit by which they are able to distinguish one from another. Go into a family of Latter-day Saints and there is a spirit with them which attracts you. There is a feeling of oneness and congeniality that does not seem to exist elsewhere. If Latter-day Saints go into the company of strangers, they can at once perceive the spirit they are of. The gift of discerning of spirits rests upon the faithful Latter-day Saints. By it they are able to discern the spirits of those with whom they are brought in contact. They can tell a man of God from a follower of Satan. They can tell a faithful Saint from an unfaithful one. They can tell the believer from the unbeliever.

The Lord has placed in His Church a great many gifts, and if we seek for them and cultivate them they will produce remarkable effects upon us. They have made us and will continue to make us a distinct and a peculiar people. But in cultivating these gifts and in being a peculiar

people, we do not discriminate against others, nor do we look upon others as unworthy of the blessings of God. We know, and so declare unto them, that if they will take the same course that we have done they can have the same gifts that have been bestowed upon us by the Lord. The people of the world think that we are very exclusive, and that we regard others as unfit to associate with us. This is a very incorrect view to take of the Latter-day Saints. They do not have this feeling. Of course, like cleaves to like. The Latter-day Saints, having obeyed the same principles, and having received of the same Spirit, which has made them one people, naturally cleave to each other. At the same time we say to the whole world that there is nothing we have that they cannot have, if they will only obey the Gospel of Christ. If they will keep the commandments of the Lord, they will be one with us and we will be one with them. It is not a feeling of exclusiveness that prompts us to separate ourselves from the world, but a desire to be with those who are like us, and with whom we can be congenial and happy, because they have been baptized into the same spirit as we have.

Brethren and sisters, if this feeling which now makes our lives so happy is cherished and cultivated by us, we shall have heaven on earth. It is a heavenly feeling; and if it shall increase among us, after a while Satan will be bound, so far as we are concerned, because he will not have power to intrude himself with his allurements and temptations into the society of the pure. We ought to cherish this feeling. We should have our habitations so filled with the spirit of peace and love, so pervaded by the influence of the spirit of God, that Satan will be powerless there. Where we dwell, peace should reign. Those who come into our houses should be able to feel that influence of the Spirit of God, so much so that they will delight to be there. In traveling among the people I have gone into houses where I could feel this blessed influence prevailing. Peace was in the family; good influences reigned in the habitation; and I felt at home there. On the other hand, I have gone into houses where there has been an unpleasant feeling. I was not comfortable, not at home. From such houses I have been glad to get away. Of course, when I have visited people for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to them, my effort has always been to conquer that kind of feeling, and I have generally succeeded in doing so. I think it is the privilege of the Elders to exert such an influence over these evil spirits that they can bring them into subjection. We should pay more attention to these gifts than we do. God has placed them in the Church for a definite purpose—for the perfection of the Saints. By them and under the influence of the Spirit of God we can develop a type of manhood that will be superior to anything upon the earth. I look for such a development of godliness through the Spirit and gifts of God—a development which will make us a superior people. At the same time it will not lift us up in pride and cause us to look down upon others; but we will understand that others have the same rights and opportunities to receive the blessings and gifts of God as we have, if they will seek for them.

We have a great work before us as a people, and that is, to rise above

our prejudices and traditions. We have inherited certain qualities and traditions which have descended from father to son through many generations. Our labor must be to get rid of these. They have been transmitted from generation to generation, and have become hereditary within us. Do you not think such a thing is possible? Certainly it is. Let me illustrate it by one instance. You know how the Jews have been persecuted, and how their property has been confiscated time after time through many generations. What has been the result? The Jews have forsaken many of the pursuits of the Gentiles. You scarcely ever hear of a Jew cultivating the soil. Why? Because generation after generation they were despoiled of their property and driven from place to place. They therefore took to trading and to dealing in money. Money was portable, and they could carry it with them if they were driven from their homes, which they could not do with houses and lands. For this reason the Jews have followed pursuits that enabled them to handle their wealth in a portable form, and they have become, as you know, the money dealers of the world. To-day the nations of Europe are in debt more to the Jews than to any other class; and this is creating such a feeling against the Jews in Russia, Germany and France that there are frequent anti-Semitic outbursts in those countries. This Dreyfus incident, which has convulsed France, serves to illustrate how the Jews are hated. I mention this to show how certain qualities have been transmitted from generation to generation among the Jews. We also have inherited certain traits and traditions. They have come down to us from our ancestors. Their method of doing things has become hereditary within us. You can see this illustrated in your own children. I have a large family and it is interesting to me to watch the development of traits that have been transmitted from my ancestors to them, through me. It is doubtless the same in your families.

Now, these traditions and peculiarities which are hereditary within us have come through generations that have been ignorant of the Gospel. They have had a form of godliness, and their way of doing things has been in accordance with that form. The result is, we have these things to combat. The leaders of the Church have them to combat, in themselves and in the people. The Prophet Joseph Smith had. He was no doubt as free from tradition and these traits of which I speak as any man that could be found—probably more so; for the Lord took him in his boyhood and taught him; but even Joseph Smith had these inherited traits to contend with. President Brigham Young had them; President John Taylor had them; President Wilford Woodruff had them; President Lorenzo Snow has them; all of us have them, to a greater or less extent. They have come down to us through so many generations that it requires the Spirit of God to enable us to emancipate ourselves from them. We cannot overcome them all at once; it will take time; but we can do it by degrees, as God gives us strength. It should be the effort of the Latter-day Saints to overcome these traditions and to become an entirely different people. God designs that we shall be. We are now laying the foundation of a condition of things that shall exist for one thousand years. How much purity,

unselfishness and obedience to God will be required on our part to do this, is what we must understand. There are many, perhaps all of us, that have more or less of a desire to conform to the ideas which prevail in the world. These ideas we have inherited, and they come natural to us; and not having progressed sufficiently to overcome them, we naturally lean toward them. We do this in politics, in finance, in trading, in almost everything. It seems to be right to us, because all our inherited tendencies are in that direction. If we could have a glimpse of heaven, and understand things as they are, we might be able to do better; but this is not God's way of doing things. He wants us to work out our own development, and to exert the powers we have inherited from Him in conquering the wrong tendencies we have inherited from our fathers. He gives us line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; but He does not reveal it all at once. At the same time He would like us to comprehend more than we do. I have sometimes thought that the Prophet Joseph, with the knowledge he possessed and the progress he had made could not stay with the people, so slow were we to comprehend things and so enshrouded in our ignorant traditions. The Saints could not comprehend Joseph Smith; the Elders could not; the Apostles could not. They did do a little towards the close of his life; but his knowledge was so extensive and his comprehension so great that they could not rise to it. It was so with President Young; and I may say it is so with the leaders of the Church now. It is a continual labor on their part to lift the people up to the comprehension of the will of God and His purposes connected with this work. The people are bound down by their traditions, and because of this it is rarely that you can get even the Elders to see the propriety of certain things.

Brethren and sisters, this is a work that devolves upon us individually. No one man, no quorum of men can lift this people up. They can teach and guide them; they can tell them what the will of the Lord is. They may have had their minds enlightened to the extent that they can perceive certain things; but they find it difficult to make others see them. This has always been the case when God has sent prophets and wise men to the people. Through lack of comprehension they have despised these men. They could not rise to the comprehension of their true characters, nor to a conception of the great truths revealed through them; and because they could not, they looked upon these men of God as fools and—shall I say insane? yes, in many instances, as insane. Agrippa told Paul that he was mad. It is madness in their eyes because it comes in contact with all the fashions and methods of the world. This is illustrated to-day in the payment of tithing. When you pay your tithing the world think you are fools. They look upon it as a direct loss to you, because they cannot comprehend the principle. It is the same if you go on missions. We have made but little progress in this direction; but so far as we have done things that are new and uncommon, just so far the world have ridiculed us. If they do not look upon us as insane, they regard us as fanatics. Nevertheless, God is lifting this people, and He will do it faster and faster if we will obey His counsels and seek to free ourselves from these miser-

able traditions that we have inherited from our fathers. Their methods of doing business, their finance, their organization of society, are all wrong. Hence the misery that there is in the world. Men have strayed from God and adopted systems of their own; and the difficulty with us is to comprehend the truth so that we may know how to emancipate ourselves from this condition. If God's will were done and His method of organizing society prevailed on the earth, there would be no thieves, and no man would take advantage of his neighbor, because it would be of no profit to him. If I were living according to the law of God as revealed through the Prophet, at stated periods I would give all my surplus into the Lord's storehouse, for the benefit of others. Of what profit would it be then for me to steal, or to cheat, or to wrong my neighbor? Thieves are the result of the bad organization of society. Poverty and destitution exist because society is not properly organized. Why is this? Because, through our inherited traditions, we are not willing to accept the plan that God has revealed. This plan would bring happiness, would banish poverty, and would make every man and woman free from the care that is now killing so many, some by reason of the great burden of property resting upon them and others for the want of something to eat. The Lord's plan would remedy this, if we only had faith enough to carry it out. There is not a wrong that cannot be righted by it—and not by any supernatural power either. Angels will not have to come to do it. Many suppose that the Millennium will be brought about by some heavenly beings coming to earth and regulating things. I do not think there is any justification for indulging in such an anticipation. Of course, God will manifest Himself, and will bestow His power; but we shall be His agents to bring about this condition of things, if we will live according to His law.

There are none of us, I suppose, but feel sad at times, owing to the present condition of things. In the office of the First Presidency the other day we listened to no less than three persons tell tales of distress, all of whom desired relief which it was almost impossible to grant under present circumstances. Why is this? Is it because the Lord does not know how to arrange affairs for His children? Can we suppose for one moment that God has not power to banish poverty from this earth? I do not think any of us entertain such an idea. Have you ever thought how it will be in heaven? Will there be poverty and distress there, and every man struggling for himself, like it is here? What are your ideas, brethren and sisters, about heaven? Some of you have large families, and our belief is that we will stand at the head of our families. How do you expect to provide for them? They will need something to eat; for God has not given us mouths and stomachs without it being necessary to have food to put in them; and I suppose you do not expect to live without habitations. No; if you are going to be what you are ordained to be, you expect to have food, houses, animals, servants, etc. How will these things be furnished you? Will it be in the same way that we obtain them here, scrambling, contending, struggling and vying with each other as we do now? God forbid that we should live in such a manner! It would not

be heaven at all. I do not think any of us would care to live in such a place eternally. But it will not be so. God knows our wants, and when we get to heaven we shall conform to the laws of heaven, which are laws of happiness, laws of peace, and laws which when obeyed will bring everything to be desired. In heaven there will be no misery, no wrong, because we will obey God's law, and obedience to His law prevents the commission of wrong. We will live in perfect happiness and peace, with immeasurable opportunities for expansion, growth and progress. I do not know how you feel, but I would not want to be in a heaven where there is no labor to perform and no room for the exercise of every power that God has endowed us with. Heaven is a place of unlimited opportunity and progress. Now, how will it be on this earth when Christ reigns? It will be similar, only in a lesser degree. When the Millennium dawns, Satan bound, and the elements of the earth at our disposal and under our control, there will be no hunger, no thirst, no nakedness, no vagrants, no houseless people; but all will have that which is necessary to supply their physical wants. But there will be no waste. One man will not be allowed to lord it over another and take possession of more than he needs; but all will have a fulness, Satan will be bound. He will not have power to inflict the misery he has done and is doing. But how has Satan obtained such power? By men obeying him instead of God. That is the root of all the misery that comes upon mankind. When Satan is bound this will be stopped. He will not be able, for a thousand years at least, to inflict upon mankind the misery and the sorrow that they have suffered through their obedience to him. After the thousand years he will regain some of his present power. It will be as it was among the Nephites. They lived for generations in unity and love. They had everything in common. They were not divided into classes; there were neither rich nor poor among them. But after a while the smart men began to think that it would be a nice thing to have the fruits of their own labor. The result was, Satan obtained power again among them, and they were rent asunder. So it will be at the end of the thousand years. Men will arise who will object to working for the benefit of others; class distinctions will once more make themselves apparent; Satan will regain his power, and will maintain it until the great battle shall take place which is spoken of in the scriptures.

Brethren and sisters, we have a good prospect before us. We are at the beginning, not the end, of the thousand years of peace. If we are faithful, we are to be the happy pioneers of this new order of things that is to be established upon the earth. Our children, if they are faithful, will live generation after generation in this glorious condition. We should therefore train ourselves and our children, and endeavor to correct these inherited tendencies to which I have alluded. Let us struggle for this better condition; let us pray for it; let us contend with our evil inclinations and overcome them by the power of God. I pray God to bless you and to fill you with His Holy Spirit; to let peace abide in your hearts and in the hearts of all your families, in the name of Jesus Christ Amen.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1899.

A CONTRAST.

It is often asked by newspaper reporters, wherein is the difference between the doctrines taught by the Latter-day Saints and those of the sects of modern Christendom. The difference is so wide and deep that it would require a long series of articles to do the subject even moderate justice. The Elders have been explaining that difference in England for about sixty years, but the people at large have been more willing to listen to the exposition of "Mormonism" by its enemies, who know nothing of it, than from its advocates, who are able and willing to give a true version of the beliefs, hopes and anticipations of that much abused people.

The Latter-day Saints take the doctrines taught by Christ and His Apostles in their entirety, while the various sects of the day have lost sight of or discarded most of those principles which are essential to the salvation and exaltation of the human race in the Kingdom of God.

We will endeavor to touch briefly upon a few of the leading points of divergence.

The first difference is in the personality of God. The Christian sects declare that He is incomprehensible. Jesus says, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." They say He is without body. Paul says that Jesus is the express image of His person. They say Jesus Christ is God; and He ascended with a body of flesh and bones. They say He is without parts, but He called Thomas to thrust his hand into His side and to feel the prints of the nails in his hands. The bible is full of references to His parts, such as face, eyes, ears, finger and back parts. They say He is without passions, but we read "God is love," He is a "jealous God," and that His "anger was kindled." They say the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one substance, but Stephen saw Christ on the right hand of God, and at the baptism of Christ the voice from heaven said "This is my beloved Son," while the Spirit of God descended like a dove—three personages all together.

Modern Christians teach that communication with the heavens has entirely ceased and no longer needed, but that the Bible is a complete guide to salvation. Amos says, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret to his servants the prophets."

The Holy Ghost is promised to all who believe, repent and are baptized, and this is to "show you things to come." John on the Isle of Patmos was shown things "which must be hereafter," and, among other things, an

angel was to "fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth."

They teach that the gifts of speaking in tongues, casting out devils, healing the sick, etc., are done away, but the last promise of Jesus was, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

Modern ministers make baptism optional, but Christ taught, "Except a man be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. It is taught now that pouring or sprinkling is baptism, but Paul said, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." Baptism now is administered to infants, but John "did preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Are infants capable of repentance or have they committed sin? Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He didn't baptize them, but "he laid his hands on them."

Modern teachers claim authority from Christ's commission to the Apostles—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." What would be the consequence should they act in the name of the Queen by virtue of reading another man's commission? Jesus told the Apostles, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you." Paul tells us, "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron."

The modern theory is that "Christ did it all" and there is nothing for man to do only to believe. Hear the Apostle James on this subject: "The devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead." Paul's advice to the Philippians was "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." If Christ did it all, what use is there for modern ministers, churches or creeds?

The protestants teach that there are only two conditions after death, heaven and hell. If this be so, how can God "render to every man according to his deeds." Paul says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." They say that the murderer on the scaffold will be saved if at the last moment he profess belief in Christ, while he whose deeds have been good all his life but makes no such profession, even after weighing the inconsistencies of modern Christianity, will be eternally damned. How can this be if they are to be "judged every man according to their works"?

The people in this age have been taught that this life ends all opportunity, and that all who fail to believe in Christ, even those who have never heard His name, are to be eternally punished; but the Savior said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Peter speaking of Christ says, "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah." Then

again: "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." A redemption for the dead is evident by a practice in the primitive Church of baptising for the dead, mentioned by Paul.

The modern belief is that man's existence began with this life, but the Lord said to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee I knew thee; and before thou camest forth I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

Modern teachers say that prophets are done away; they also discard apostles; but Paul taught that God placed these in the church, and he tells why as follows: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Is it possible that the Christians have reached that state of perfection?

Now, these are some of the scriptural doctrines believed in and practiced by the Latter-day Saints, and they prefer them rather than the contradictory doctrines taught by modern uninspired teachers who "have a form of Godliness, but deny the power thereof."

A. W.

HEARD FROM.—We have received a very bright and cheerful letter from the two Armenian brethren, Geo. A. Vizerian and Geo. G. Nadgarian, who, through the liberality of the Elders and the Saints, were privileged to gather to Zion a few weeks ago. They are very grateful and both break out into effusive verse which we are unable to publish because of the demand on the columns of the STAR, but they beg for the expression of love and thanks to all the Saints for their consideration. They appear to be satisfied with their new surroundings, and are full of testimony and have high hopes that their labors will be of service in building up the Kingdom of God on the earth. We are glad to hear from them.

It was with regret that we gave the parting hand-shake to Elder Preston J. Cannon of the German Mission. He was released to return home on account of failing health, but he was very loth to give up and return so soon, as he had been in the mission field only about eight months. He was accompanied by his brother, Elder Lewis T. Cannon, who expects to return after seeing his brother safely through. They sailed on the s.s. *Ontario* for Quebec on Saturday, September 30.

NORWICH CONFERENCE NOTICE.—The Norwich Conference will be held at St. Peter's Hall, St. Peter's Street, Norwich, October 15, 1899. Meetings will commence at 10:30 a.m., and 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. All Latter-day Saints of the Norwich Conference are requested to attend, and all friends and seekers after truth are cordially invited. The Presidency of the European mission will be present.

WANTED.—Margret Creighton Kearney desires to learn the whereabouts of her sister, Elnori Creighton, who sailed from Ireland 50 years ago. She married Joseph Pugmire. Address James K. Miller, 53 Holmhead Street, Glasgow, Scotland.—*Deseret News please copy.*

PRESIDENT LYMAN made a flying visit last Saturday to the Leeds Conference, and returned on Tuesday accompanied by his son Albert. President Naisbitt went with President Lyman, but will remain for some time visiting relatives.

Last week we had a pleasant visit from President A. L. Farrell of the Netherlands Mission, who had been to Glasgow to see his wife safely embarked for Zion. He left for his field of labor on Saturday, Sept. 30.

RELEASES.—Isaac S. Smith of the London Conference and T. W. Lloyd of the Nottingham Conference have been honorably released to return home per s.s. *Furnessia*, which will sail from Glasgow, October 12, 1899.

ABSTRACT OF CORRESPONDENCE.

ELDER M. S. LEAVER gives the following account of a visit of President McMurrin to Birmingham:

"President Ash, with the elders and saints of the Birmingham Conference, felt much gratified with a visit from President Jas. L. McMurrin last Sunday, October 1. In the evening President McMurrin addressed the meeting in Hockley Chapel, and in a very comprehensive manner treated upon the growth and development of faith as applied to the First Principles of the Gospel.

"Considering the inclemency of the weather, the meeting was well attended, and many expressions of satisfaction were heard among the audience.

"On Monday a priesthood meeting was held at the Conference House, at which President Ash, and fourteen elders of the Birmingham Conference were present. Some good reports were given in by the elders, after which Presidents Ash and McMurrin gave some very valuable counsel and advice. Many important subjects were taken up and discussed, and a feeling of general satisfaction was expressed by the elders as they dispersed to their respective fields of labor, renewed with zeal and feeling greatly blessed for their meeting together. President McMurrin continued his visit in Birmingham until Tuesday, when, to the regret of the elders, he returned to Liverpool."

DEBATES BY ELDERS.

THERE is a disposition on the part of some opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to challenge our Elders on missions to

meet them in public discussion. Such challenges usually proceed from practiced debaters and to inexperienced young men. They are also framed in a way to catch the unwary in a trap, so as to place the Elder at a disadvantage. The purpose in view is seldom to bring out the truth, but usually to confound and intimidate and raise prejudice and excitement.

Occasionally there may be some profit in meeting anti-"Mormons" on the public platform in public contention. Usually, however, it is time and energy worse than wasted. The result largely depends on the adroitness and skill of the combatants and the disposition of the audience. A debate is to some extent like a pugilistic encounter. It does not often determine the truth or justice of the cause at issue, but merely the forensic abilities of the champions on either side.

In case of a contest made necessary by circumstances, our Elders should take solid ground. The Church is not bound by the views expressed by individuals, which have not been accepted as articles of faith or official declarations of doctrine. Many works have been published on the principles of our religion which are not authorized exponents thereof. In any event, they are not to be taken as standards, but simply for what they are, and must be gauged by the real standards of doctrine and discipline.

The written standards of the Church are the Bible, (King James' translation), the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Articles of Faith, and the Pearl of Great Price. The precepts and principles contained in these works can be consistently upheld by the Elders of the Church in controversy, and they should not go outside of that category for written authority on doctrine and discipline.

This will simplify matters greatly, and save much bickering and strife, which are unprofitable to both speakers and hearers. There are ideas and notions in many works that have been published by Elders and others, that have not been accepted by the body of the Church, or even by its leaders. They may be true and may not. They may be worthy of thought and consideration, and yet not be regarded as part of the religion of the Latter-day Saints.

But it will be found in the experience of the Elders, that such speculations and theories as have not been officially formulated into Church doctrine, are usually selected by opponents as the basis of their opposition to the Church, and as topics for public discussion. Also that even they are not fairly presented, but isolated sentences and parts of sentences are picked out, and sometimes linked together in improper connection for the purpose of confusing the person challenged to debate.

The preaching of the Gospel, with a sincere testimony of the truth, is usually the only needful public ministration of the "Mormon" missionary. Reliance on the spirit of the occasion will be found the great security. Elders should treasure up the word of life and truth in their souls, make themselves thoroughly familiar with that which has been revealed, teach the plain, simple things of the Kingdom, and avoid that contention which seeks simply to excel, to break down and to expose to ridicule and animosity, and that does not aim at the victory of truth over error. Investi-

gation reaches after light. Contention leads into darkness and is of the evil one.—*Deseret News*.

QUIET CHATS. No. 2.

THE DIVINE MISSION OF CHRIST.

MR. BINKS. Aha! I am glad to see you.

MR. WHITE. I may pay you the same compliment, but as you have not hurried your return visit, I had begun to think your interest had waned, or that I should have to come and see you.

MR. B. Well I should have made you heartily welcome, albeit my house may not be quite as orderly as yours.

MR. W. I am surprised to hear you say this, for my family being mainly grown, we often have company, and when alone there are so many topics which interest us, that at times we are quite noisy if not strictly argumentative.

MR. B. You find new topics then all the time?

MR. W. To be sure we do, there are current events, public questions, local matters, general reading, with interchange of comment, and then the never failing questions of religious faith and action, seem so important at times, that they get the preference.

MR. B. Why I thought you and yours more stable than that; then surely in this enlightened age there can be nothing new in theology?

MR. W. Oh! there you are mistaken, true theology is a divine science, and consequently we are always making discoveries,—finding heights and depths, connections, inferences and associations of ideas to which there is no end.

MR. B. Well tastes differ, or as the old proverb says, "One man's meat is another man's poison," although I have really given more thought to these—what I might call—unprofitable things since our conversation, than in all my life before.

MR. W. I have no regrets about this, for it has long been evident to me, that human nature can never be fully satisfied by either observation or common experience; we feel as if there was something more than this life; bread and butter and clothing and home, fail to stifle certain inner longings—the longings of the heart, or to explain the mystery of life and death; nay even the present presents problems we cannot solve as yet, and the future is almost a blank.

MR. B. But why worry? you remember an old saying, "What we know not now, we shall know hereafter."

MR. W. Yes, "Wise saws and modern instances" have their uses, but existence is a curious, a knotty, a serious problem, and surely man with all his powers, faculties and possibilities is far more than the present time.

MR. B. Never mind, we talked about God when I was here last, you looked upon him as your Creator, surely he is able to take care of "the workmanship of his own hands."

MR. W. He evidently does in great part; the birds of the air, the animal creation, all forms of life in fact are the subjects of his care; there is provision in abundance for their subsistence and continuance, as the earth provides for them, and season, climate, conditions create or affect types of life; but man is more than they, he is a sovereign if a subject, intellect is his, judgment and reason are the hand-maids of his well being, and while toil and effort appear to be his destiny, yet from that toil he, out of the elements which surround him, multiplies, invents, discovers, applies, advances, until ignorance might easily conclude, "Surely *he* is a God."

MR. B. I too am a lover of nature, its moods charm me, its variety attracts my attention, there is an unutterable glory in the starry heavens, and in the silent music of the spheres, and all the nearer chords of melody on earth fall on my gratified ear, from the singing of birds to the rippling of a brook, from the surge of the ocean to the softly falling flakes of snow; then mountain and waterfall, rivers and rills, fertile fields and the uncultivated parts of the earth possess, each in their turn, a perennial feast for observation, and become a psalm of joy. Man alone seems to be an enigma; all things besides are good, very good.

MR. W. This is the one great theme of mine, and without the Bible most of it would be as "a sealed book;" and yet if there is purpose in nature or creation, there must also be purpose in man.

MR. B. I half believe now, in God the Eternal Father, the One regarding whom much can be learned through His works, but theological ideas are not so obvious, for instance, Nature, while it partially unveils a God, says nothing of the necessity for Jesus Christ.

MR. W. Probably not, God is certainly a necessity in and to nature, but the latter is not so plainly written, and a superficial look would declare him to be superfluous. But even your conceptions of Deity in Nature have to be supplemented by revelation before you grasp Him, and the value of a Christ needs possibly more to be manifested by the same light of revelation.

MR. B. Now you touch quite a mystery, a something needed, valued in the dark ages, in the infancy of man perchance, but unheeded and unneeded in this age of progress and wonderful intelligence.

MR. W. You are sadly mistaken there, both as to the mystery and the necessity, for all human activity and progress is based on this so-called mystery.

MR. B. It almost appears as if you were a mystery as great, but please explain yourself.

MR. W. Why, the world moves in an atmosphere of revelation, it is an every day condition, we are all engaged in it and are subject to it.

MR. B. Well I have to smile now, and while I am not a crank as I think, and would not call you one, one of us or both are out of our depth.

MR. W. Why this is only shallow water if you only think; everyone who communicates light or knowledge to the ignorant is a revelator to that one; the parent to the child, the teacher to the pupil, the expert to the apprentice, the mother to her daughter, indeed wherever intelligence is needed there a revelator is a necessity also, for revelation truly is

the imparting of knowledge possessed by one to another without it, no matter what the topic or study, no matter how it may vary in degree, whether it pertains to this life, or any other, this is its essential characteristic.

MR. B. This surely simplifies what all men have believed to be beyond comprehension, but as to religion or religious matters all the orthodox divines assure us, that in their department, there has been no revelation since the Apostolic age, as I have heard many declare.

MR. W. That, as you can see, has made religion an uncertainty or a stand-still science, while knowledge in every other avenue of human thought has increased almost to excess, or as fast as it could be appropriated.

MR. B. You overlook my friend one grand distinction, all the illustrations you give teach by personal contact, and as you observe we all have learned and still learn in that way.

MR. W. I am well aware of that, and there is a veritable difference in action, though results are very similar; the Bible is not only a record of communication between man and man, but between man and intelligences beyond the veil, those outside the reach of ordinary human vision or of men in the flesh, for the presence and voice of God Himself was heard in commandment when the earth was young, as you have lately read, and afterward angels or special messengers were employed when the machinery of earth and man was fairly started, then Patriarchs and Prophets became the medium through which "the word of the Lord" was given, and prophecy was in later times so often fulfilled after this method came, that men counted the Prophet as a medium between Deity and themselves—His children.

MR. B. But why did not God or the Lord continue the original method of personal manifestation?

MR. W. Simply because all His ministers and messengers were ever willing and ready to do His bidding, just as the servants of the Queen of England or the servants of the President of the United States are ready in their calling; these dignitaries do not personally attend to all the minutiae of the State.

MR. B. The analogy is accepted, and its fairness beyond controversy, I think.

MR. W. Then besides, the economy of God was vastly broader than the moment or the occasion; it had already been decreed that His posterity should come to the earth after it was prepared, so as to secure a body, for purposes reached only through the coming of a Savior and the opening of the doors of the resurrection, so to Him "all the Prophets bear witness."

MR. B. Your thought unfolds purpose and pre-arrangement, but it would seem that men coming from a higher or other sphere, should remember something of your theory, if it be true?

MR. W. The veil of the flesh intrudes, so that man may be tried in ignorance, perplexity and darkness; but there can be no doubt that we all once knew of "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world," and that in the meridian of time He should dwell in the flesh as the Savior and exemplar to all who would listen to His voice.